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Ministry of Advanced Education

PROVINCE FUNDS PROSTATE RESEARCH EXPANSION AT VGH

VANCOUVER – Provincial funding of $2.8 million will expand the Prostate Cancer Centre at Vancouver General Hospital to help turn discoveries in cancer biology into improved prostate cancer treatments, Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell announced today.

"The Prostate Centre at Vancouver General Hospital is a national Centre of Excellence, Canada's most comprehensive prostate treatment facility, and one of the world's leading facilities for research and treatment of prostate cancer," said Coell. "Provincial funding will keep B.C. at the forefront of prostate cancer research and continue to position us as world leaders."

The research conducted through the University of British Columbia at the Prostate Centre's Translational Research Initiative for Accelerated Discovery and Development (PC-TRIADD) will apply state-of-the-art therapeutic approaches to the analysis and treatment of prostate cancer.

"This expansion further advances B.C.'s leadership and innovation in specialized heath care," said Health Minister George Abbott. "In addition, this expansion enhances the ability of the Prostate Cancer Centre to help reduce the incidence of cancer, reduce the mortality from cancer and improve the quality of life for those living with cancer."

The contribution under the B.C. Knowledge Development Fund will be used to expand the Prostate Centre at VGH with a 2,700-square-metre, three-storey extension to the west side of the Jack Bell Research Centre. This will consolidate all of the research components of the Prostate Centre into a single integrated facility, with the exception of the clinical trials unit.

"Currently, prostate cancer is the most common cancer and second leading cause of cancer deaths in men in North America. One of the main obstacles to improved survival in advanced prostate cancer is the cancer's ability to progress and recur after hormone therapy and chemotherapy," said UBC president Stephen Toope. "Researchers believe that in order to improve survival, new therapeutic strategies must be developed, which will be a focus of B.C.'s expanded Prostate Cancer Centre."

"To be successful and globally competitive, translational research requires investment in high priority, disease-focused research programs and outstanding management teams, such as those at the Prostate Centre," said Dr. Martin Gleave, director of the Prostate Centre at VGH and the B.C. Leadership Chair in Prostate Cancer Research. "Although focused on prostate cancer, many services and discoveries made by our investigators are useful in other cancers, such as breast, lung, colon, and bladder cancer."

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Since 2001, a total of 556 projects and almost $345 million in funding have been approved by the provincial government under the British Columbia Knowledge Development Fund. This funding has leveraged over $379 million from the Canada Foundation for Innovation and another $283 million from other non-provincial-government sources, for a total investment in British Columbia's research infrastructure of over $1 billion.

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